Cleaning, freezing and cooking steelhead
Not only are steelhead challenging and hard-fighting, they are good eating too. In fact, many aficionados prefer fresh steelhead to salmon. There are many ways and hundreds of recipes to prepare fresh steelhead – baked, grilled or smoked; sweet, salty or spicy.

Cleaning and freezing your catch
Your catch should be cleaned and gutted as soon as possible. After removing the guts and gills, cut the kidney membrane along the backbone and scrape away the blood using your thumb or a spoon. Removing the internal organs and gills promptly helps prevent bacteria and blood clots from tainting or discoloring the meat.
If you don’t plan to eat your fish in a day or two, you’ll want to freeze it. Most freezing methods work best if you quick freeze the fish first – place uncovered fish on a sheet of aluminum foil in the freezer to freeze it as quickly as possible.
The best method for keeping fish in the freezer is to vacuum seal it, which protects the fish from freezer burn. Quick freeze the fish, then seal it in a vacuum seal bag. Vacuum sealed frozen fish should be eaten within three or four months.
Another way to protect fish from freezer burn is to freeze it in a block of water. Quick freeze individual portions, place each in a zip lock freezer bag, fill with water and freeze.
Finally, if you’re going to be eating the fishing within two weeks you can double wrap quick frozen fish tightly in plastic (squeeze out as much air as possible) and then in freezer paper.

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If you're fishing from a boat, be sure to give bank plugs slowly swung in the current. Downstream, plugs also can be cast from the bank and let drifting naturally in the current and then casting the spinner slightly upstream for better luck with steelhead. Pulling plugs (aka hot-shotting, backtrolling) -- "swing" toward the bank.